

The Penalty

by John Larimore

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Summary: Taylor's life, from accident to end.

The Penalty

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*****THE PENALTY**

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Once, I had it all. Then I lost almost everything. I gained it all back at a price. Now, I'm about to lose _everything. _No, almost to it. Let me begin at the beginning.

>

My name is Taylor. I am the queen. Every boy wants me. Every girl envies me. I am admired by all. With just my looks, I can do anything. Then one night, it happened.

>

What's happening? Are my parents home? Who turned on that light?

No, not a light. Fire! What happened?

I can't get out! Help me!

Pain! I've got to escape. I can't!

>

Things were a confused blurr for a while. Nothing, but fear and pain. When my mind cleared, I was in a hospital. My parents standing over me. The firemen had saved my life. At least partly.

>

They keep giving me pain medication. It helps, but what do I do?

My arm gone. My leg gone.

The bandages come off today. Oh god! My face gone! I've lost my face!

I'm hideous. My family won't say it, but I'm hideous.

My friends don't come by any more.

I should have died. I wish I had.

>

Then some kid I don't know. Asking if I want to join the sharing. He said they'll accept me. I guess I'll try. Then things got strange.

>

Don't mock me. The doctors said that this damage couldn't be undone.

Why did you ask me here? To torment me?

No, you're serious aren't you? You really have these medical procedures?

>

There was a price tag. Before I would have said, "Of course." At this point I said, "I don't care."

>

They're called Yeerks. Intelligent, parasitic slugs. Unlike anything on earth.

One will be in me. If they can give me my life back, I don't care.

Head in the water. Now it's crawling down my ear canal. Finally wrapping around my brain.

I did it, now fix me.

>

It was true. Everything they said was true. My skin was being repaired. My face back to the way it was. An artificial leg that works as well as the real one I lost. An artificial arm as perfect as a natural one. None of those stiff, merged fingers I've seen. Instead, a dexterous hand. Then, before

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the treatments on face were finished, a change.

>

No! I won't do it! My mother wasn't part of the deal.

I can't! I won't give her over to you.

She-you won't stop the treatment will you? I've kept my part of the bargain. You didn't tell me about this.

You won't hurt her will you?

No. No, I wont. You can't-if I refuse you'll still-won't you?

Don't hurt her.

>

I didn't think it was evil at the time. I couldn't see past myself. I got my face back. And once again I was admired, plus I has a secret position of power. Well, it wasn't really mine, but it was power still.

>

It was their fault. They made me do it.

They did this by turning their backs on me.

No one forgets me. I am Taylor Fifty-one.

No, that's not right. Taylor and Sub-Visser Fifty-one. Two of us, think focus.

Sub-Visser Taylor. What's wrong?

>

A new project. An anti-morphing ray. We'll beat the Andalites. Then it all went wrong. We failed. The Andalite escaped. The ray failed.

>

How did this happen? We're fugitives now! We have to stay in hiding. Visser Three will kill us.

You're right. We have to work on separating our minds.

Taylor and Sub Visser Fifty-one. Human and Yeerk. Two. Separate.

It's working! We're apart!

No! What are you doing! You're suppressing me! You're not supposed to do that. Stop!

>

I was betrayed. I was not supposed to be a slave. Then it got worse. I knew plan. Sub-Visser would redeem herself. She'd sacrifice me and come out of hiding a hero.

>

Please don't do this! We're allies! We can work something out together!

All right, you're going to kill me. Just not fire! Please don't make me go through that again.

No, don't! This isn't what you said!

Oh Lord, what did I do to myself?

Don't work with her Andalite!

>

It's over. I don't know if the Andalites or the Yeerk peace movement will survive. I'm almost certain I won't. I made a deal with the devil and now there'll be hell to pay.

>

>

>

The pain again! It's worse than last time! Unbearable!

She's laughing! She's mad!

>

There was secret pool. Unknown to anyone, but Sub Visser Fifty-one, her allies, and herself. She jumps in. Or falls in. The flames are gone. Too late for me. Maybe she'll die to. Doesn't matter.

>

Do I deserve this? Maybe it's punishment?

Forgive me, Mom?

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End
file.